

LESSON 4

THROUGHOUT PALESTINE, PART 1

We will now see Jesus on a final tour of Palestine. Knowing that His time on earth was drawing to a close, Christ intensified His teaching. All of it related, one way or another, to the importance of proper attitudes. The Lord's followers in the first century required attitude adjustments—even as we do today.

TO BETHANY (JN. 11:1–53)

Jesus' ministry in Perea was interrupted by an urgent message from Bethany (Jn. 11:1). Christ's friends Mary and Martha sent word that their brother, Lazarus, was ill (Jn. 11:3). [See *Life of Christ*, 2, pp. 159–166.]

1. Could Jesus have reached Bethany before Lazarus died?
2. Why did Jesus delay two days in responding to His friends' summons?
3. How was this resurrection different from the two previous accounts of Jesus raising someone from the dead?
4. Why did Jesus weep before raising Lazarus from the dead?

A special session of the Sanhedrin was convened in John 11:47. Not long before, Christ had spoken of those who "will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead" (Lk. 16:31). Lazarus' rising from the dead did not produce faith in the hard-hearted leaders, but rather panic. (See Jn. 11:47–53.)

5. What concern brought the council together for this special meeting?
6. What did Caiaphas mean in Jn. 11:50?
7. How did this council's plan to kill Jesus differ from previous plots against His life?

FINAL JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

(MT. 19:1—20:34; MK. 10:1–52; LK. 17:11—19:27)

Finally, the time drew near for the Passover feast, and pilgrims started toward Jerusalem (Jn. 11:55). Jesus' teaching and activities during this final journey to Jerusalem are given in some detail. Traveling with the crowd were Jesus' ever-present critics, the Pharisees. They asked Him "when the kingdom of God was coming" (Lk. 17:20a). [See *Life of Christ*, 2, pp. 167–174.]

8. How do Jesus' words in Lk. 17:20b still have application for sign-seekers today?
9. In what two ways can Jesus' statement that the kingdom of God is "in your midst" be interpreted?
10. In Jesus' discourse covering Lk. 17:22–37, what did He tell His disciples about His return at the end of the age?
11. What other event does Jesus describe in this discourse, which seems to overlap with His statements about the Second Coming?

Difficult times were ahead for Christ (Lk. 17:25) and His followers (Lk. 18:7)—times that could only be endured by staying close to God. Jesus therefore turned to the subject of prayer (Lk. 18:1–14).

12. What was the general application of the parable of the persistent widow, and what was the special point that Jesus used the parable to make to His disciples?
13. What must accompany prayer?
14. Who was Jesus most likely concerned with when He told the parable in Lk. 18:9–14?

Traveling with Christ were His persistent antagonists, the Pharisees. A short time before, they had asked Him "when the kingdom of God was coming" (Lk. 17:20). Now they interrupted Him with another question, this time about divorce (Mt. 19:1–12; Mk. 10:1–12).

15. What were some of the ways in which the Pharisees hoped to trap Jesus using the divorce question?

16. How did Jesus answer their question and yet avoid falling into their trap?
17. Why did the Israelites' hardness of heart prompt God to allow divorce?
18. To what statement did Jesus refer in Mt. 19:11?

On the way to Jerusalem, during a rest stop, mothers brought their children to Jesus to be blessed by Him. Christ's disciples rebuked the women, but Jesus rebuked the rebukers (Mt. 19:13–15; Mk. 10:13–16; Lk. 18:15–17).

19. Why did the disciples rebuke the women for bringing their children to Jesus?
20. How did Jesus' words about the children reflect on infant baptism?